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ABSTRACT  
OF THE  
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OF  
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WHICH

**Oppresses our Poore.**

Humbly Offered to the  
**PARLIAMENT.**

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## An Abstract of the Grievances of Trade which Oppress our Poor,

*Humbly offered to the Parliament.*

**I** Need no farther Proof of our Calamity and Decay of Trade, than a true Account of the Hard Charge upon Land, to the necessary Relief of our Poor in all places of our Woollen Manufacture in *England*, which in many Parishes is a greater Expence, than the necessary Support of our War. And to excuse the present Juncture of Affairs, I refer to the Pressures of the Farmer fifteen or twenty Years past; during which time his Wooll, Corn, Beef, Mutton, &c. did not yield so much by a third part, as it did in former days, although in Peace with all *Europe*. Notwithstanding which Charge, could I here set forth the Hardships that many Weavers and Spinners have undergone these two Years last past, preserving Life only by the hard Fare of Beans and Water, which is true in too many Instances of Fact, (who in former days lived handsomely by their Labour.) It could not but move the Pity of this Great Council, since it evidently Springs, not so much from the Badness of Trade in it self, as the Prevailing Power of Forreign and Private Interest in the Management. And since this Hard Fare in the Country is in great measure occasioned by the Delicates of Capons and Turbets, the Splendor and Equipage of Intruders in the City, who live upon the Woollen Manufacture, like *Solomon's* Lillies, and neither Toil nor Spin. And had not the Benign Favour of Providence happily interven'd in a Plentiful Crop of Corn and Fruit, Necessity had compelled a more Tumultuous Address. And the Hopes of this Session is the only Support of many considerable Traders; the Hazard in the present Management of the Sale of Cloth, being too great to adventure an Estate in the City of *London*.



I. The first Grievance that I humbly offer to Consideration, is the Exportation of our Wooll into *France* and *Holland*, which Practice is so Obvious and well known, that I need not spend time in making any Discovery, whilst of three thousand Packs of long Wooll that grows annually in *Rumney Marsh*, it is credibly believed that Two thousand are carried into *France*. Neither can I think it needful, to set forth the Loss that our Nation hereby sustains, when each Pack of long Worsted Wooll is fifty Pounds loss to our Nation in the Manufacture. Besides, by the mixture of one Pack of ours, they work up two of their own to a far greater Advantage. And whilst they are hereby likewise become Competitors with us in the Woollen Manufacture at all our Forreign Markets with their cheap Workmanship: How to prevent this great Mischief, is the proper Subject of this Great Council, which being effectually done, would more affect *France*, than a Million of Money expended in the best Method that could be contrived; and likewise enable us to pay a Million more to carry on the War: And have the same good Effect as in the days of *Edward III.* to bring back a multitude of our Manufactures that we have lost, which would be no small Advantage to our Nation; for although in some respects at present we have too many People in *England*, yet in the general we much want: Our Wooll is the Bread of our Nation, and no Compensation can be made for its loss, or other ways to be found (whatsoever we may flatter our selves) for the Employment of our Poor, that will Support its Practice; Providence having distributed to all Nations some peculiar Assistance, thereby to keep all parts of the World in a dependence upon each other; and the setting up Work-houses for the Employment of our Poor, even in the Woollen Manufacture, in the present Circumstances of our Trade, will be but Skinning over the Distemper, which in a little time will break out in the greater Rage. For if those that are bred up to a Profession, cannot get a Livelihood by the Employment of our Poor in their own way, it is very unlikely that those that are to come into a Practice in the use of a Publick Stock, should have any tolerable Success; and the raising any such Stock, would be very difficult at present in all those places where it is most wanting, being very much Impoverish'd already by an equal Expence, in the Relief of the Poor, and Charge of our War. We have Wooll enough growing in *England*, with the help of our Spanish, to imploy more Poor than we have; and was our

Trade



Trade but duly encouraged, our Work-people would be sought after. And it's remarkable, that whilst we give Money freely upon one hand, to carry on a War against *France* with Vigor, we should Support them upon the other with our Wooll, which hath been no small Kindness. When the *French* parted with *Ireland*, they carried off a great quantity of Wooll and Yarn, which put them upon a Manufacture for *Turkey*: They have since been supplied with great quantities of Wooll from us; the *Straits* hath been open to them; and to help them to a good Market, our *Turkey*-Merchants bound up their own Hands from sending, which hath very much impoverish'd our Poor.

II. The next Grievance in Trade that comes in course to be considered, is the loss of the Reputation of our Woollen Manufactures abroad, occasioned by our slight making and overstraining them; in which particular I think we are arrived at Perfection, every private Maker's Rule being freely become his own Choice. And until this Mischief to the Publick is redress'd, I think it in vain to propose to our selves a greater Consumption.

This hath evidently prevailed upon us, as the Forreign Merchants of *Holland*, *France*, *Flanders*, *Germany*, *Sweden*, &c. hath made themselves Principals in our Markets, in buying our English Commodities by their Forreign and English Factors residing with us.

These Factors being obliged to buy such Price-Goods as their Principals abroad direct; and the Makers in *England* being under no Rule or Restraint from the Government in making their Goods, they quickly drop'd from their Standard Goodness, and as Prices were beat down upon them, have still made the Commodity worse. The Forreign Merchants, especially the Dutch, having a nearer Interest of their own to prefer in the Woollen Manufactures, hath always been a beating down the Prices of ours, without a due Respect to the Goodness, knowing well enough that it was the Intrinsick Goodness of our English Cloth in former days, that always kept a Check upon them. Our late Government having been likewise so kind to forward this Practice ever since the 25 *Caroli* 2. by taking of Aliens Duties, from all our Woollen Manufactures, and putting the Forreign Merchant upon an equal Foot with the English, it hath prevailed so far, that nine parts in ten of our Woollen Manufactures that are vendid in *Holland*, *Flanders*,

and great part of *Germany*, are carried over upon these Foreign Merchants accounts, as likewise in their Bottoms.

The exact Care of our Ancestors, successively to prevent this Mischief, and encourage the English Merchant, doth certainly very much reflect upon the Practice of our days, in which we have seemingly lost the Love of Brethren.

*Henry VII. Anno primo, cap. 2.* made an Act, That Aliens made Denizons, should pay the same Duty as if they were Aliens, whilst we excuse Aliens, and make no difference between an English Merchant and an Alien in all our Native Privileges. *With a great Sum*, said the Chief Captain, *obtained I this Freedom*: But said *St. Paul*, *I was Free born*.

It is impossible to prevent this Loss to our Nation, but by establishing the Merchandise of our Woollen Manufacture in English hands; who pursuant to their own Native Interest, will be obliged to examine the Goodness of their Goods, and be Ambitious of preserving their Reputation, who are always upon the Spot to consult with the Maker, and receive constant Advice from their English Correspondents abroad how Commodities please, how Fashions govern, and what Measures are to be taken to prevent the Dutch and French gaining Ground upon us. It must be allowed, that no part of the World can equal us in the Woollen Manufacture, in the diligent Improvement of those Advantages which Providence hath afforded us. And the Reputation and Goodness of any Commodity is a very great Inducement to its Sale, so long as a real Benefit doth likewise thereby accrue to the Buyer; Cloth being the Foundation, of almost as great a Charge in trimming and making a Suit, and the saving of Threepence in-making, doth make the Commodity Ninepence the worse in its real Merit. This being the Foundation of our Riches, it ought sure to be the principal Care of our Government; but no Law can be effectual, without Incorporating our Woollen Manufacture in English hands to be Exported.

For if a forreign Merchant hath a Servant of his residing in *England*, which hath the freedom of our Markets in buying and sending him over, such Goods as he directs, he can easily order the making of such and such cheap slight Goods, and find Makers enough to make them for him, if they are assured of their Chapmen. For all that the strictest Examiner can do, pursuant to any Law, is but to give Light to the Buyer for his Government: So that should we endeavour to reform this Grievance.

Grievance by a Law, with the concurrent Assistance of our English Merchants, and leave a Liberty to this Forreign or English Factor to act for Forreign Merchants, the Credit that is gained abroad by the English Merchant, shall be undermined and interlop't away, by false English Goods of like making in an extraordinary Profit to the Forreigner, in which Particular we are not without a Famous Instance, where the Tilletts, Scales, and Coat of Arms, of an English Merchant, were counterfeited by a Dutch Factor, and worse Goods made up under his Mark, which was proved in an open Court in *England*, and Damages allowed. I doubt we are too short in contending in Trade with the subtle Dutch, whilst we leave open such Blots as this. This is like a two edged Sword to our Poor, it lessens the Consumption, and immediately takes the Bread out of their Mouths; For there is more Workmanship (in many Particulars required to the Manufacturing two Cloths exactly well) than is now used to the making of three, and Money very well expended.

III. To this debasing our Woollen Manufacture, being added in the Next Place the unnecessary Charge of ten *per Cent.* upon it, we need not wonder at our want of Consumption abroad, or Complaint in our Streets at home, which is fully compleated by the Profit of the Wooll Jobber, Salary of the Factor, and his Profit out of Wooll, the attendant Charges of new Pressing, Ware-house Room, Portridge, Postage, Cash-money, &c. which is always a large Article in a Factor's Account, and the more Secret Profit of the Packer, &c.

These are sorry Bullworks in Trade, to cope with the Frugal Industrious Contrivance, and exact making of the Dutch in all their Woollen Manufactures, and the cheap Workmanship of *France*, whilst both are manufacturing our own Wooll. This dead Weight upon the Master Wheel of our Trade, hath been fixt by the Loss of the Publick Market of *Blackwell-hall* in *London*, where in former Days the Clothier met the English Merchant, that was a Free-man, who was thereby alone impowered to buy in this Market, and sold him his Cloth, afterwards received his Money, and bought his Wooll of the Grower, which was a strait Current of Trade, which now by the Power of Private Interest, is drawn into a Meander, and its Course so much retarded through the great City, that the Country is starved.

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This Alteration of the Sale of Cloth, from the Publick Market into Private Houses, and the Management by Factors and Packers, hath introduced a Swarm of Inconveniences, which would be too tedious to Particularize; like the Limner, I will fix upon the Head, and therein shadow the rest, which I take to be the long Credit of Six, Nine, and Twelve Months Time, which at present is usually taken in the Payment for Cloth after bought, without making any such Condition in the buying. This is a Customary Accomodation extorted from the Maker, by the Cunning of the Factor, to support his own Station, and introduce a farther Profit to himself out of Wooll, which in the next Place is politickly converted into a Shew-horn by the Merchant, to get their Goods the cheaper, and peel the Country. In the first Place, They hereby overpower the Maker's Stock, and puts him upon Stops in Trade, which hath very much beaten down the Price of Workmanship. The Circumstance of our Poor from this long Credit is truly lamentable, Wages in the first place is hereby beaten down three Pence in a Shilling. This being likewise ill paid, hath forced most part of our Poor to buy their Wheat, Malt and other Necessaries of Badgers, a great Growth of which hath lately sprung up in our Nation; where in many Particulars, they have not had above ten penniworth for a Shilling. And which is yet more impoverishing, These Badgers are great Sellers of Brandy and hot Liquors, and our Poor having a constant Resort to their Houses, are under a constant Temptation to drink. And although there need no Inducement after a Habit is taken, yet being got into these Mens Debts, they are forced to sweeten their Credit, by a new---Lottery. Could there be a Law provided to put a stop to this ill Habit of drinking hot Liquors, it would be of great Service to our Nation, and that Grain that is hereby expended is doubly lost by palling the Stomachs of our Poor, besides a worse Consequence in shortning their Lives. In the next Place, they hereby command the Clothier in buying his Wooll at Shear-time, to get it the cheaper of the Farmer. Both which have been effectual means to answer their Design. The First in beating down Wages, hath lessened the Price of Corn, Cheese, Beef, Mutton, &c. which hath put the Breeder upon the great Necessity to sell his Wooll at Shear-time, the Clothing Stock being now wholly involved in the City of London, all Payments are generally stopt at that Time of the Year. How far this hath prevailed, let those that are concerned consider. And the

the greatest part of our Trade being managed by Forreign and English Factors, the Advantage of this centers in *Holland* and other Nations.

This long Credit hath drawn over abundance of Interlopers, or Forreign Factors, from *Holland*, the Hanse Towns of *Germany*, *Flanders*, *France*, *Sweden*, &c. which are readily courted by their Brethren the Factors in *London*, and although too many of them left their own Country, because the Air was too sharp for their Pockets, yet they are hereby enabled to make large Masters of Goods upon their Principals abroad, whose Service they court before they desire their Bills for Payment, which is a strong Fortification to a Man's Credit, and a prevailing Complement these hazardous Times. And all this done for two *per Cent*. The Insurance I must confess is cheap enough, being made upon the Goods, I wish that was all the Hazard the Maker was at, and that he needed not an Insurance for his Chapman too.

This Practice is of Power enough to draw all the Commissions out of English Hands that have any Substance; and will in a little time destroy one Branch of the Revenue of our Prerogative-Courts: The Inventories of our Clothiers Estates, in a short Time, will be fully ballanced by bad Debts of Insurance; as in a late Instance of as good a Maker as *England* ever bred, whose Estate was ballanced by his Factor in five and thirty Hundred Pounds bad Debts.

This Credit being not only the Foundation of the English Factor, but a Compass whereby he steers his Clothiers to his Ware-house of Wooll, it hath begot so intire a Friendship between him and the Interloper, their Interests thus Jumping, that the English Merchant that bought the Cloth for those Parts, paid ready Money, and sometimes convertst with the Clothiers, hath been wholly discouraged and beat out of Trade. And so great a Familiarity sprung up between these Brethren in their frequent Meeting at the Post-house to receive their Letters of Patterns, the one from his Masters abroad, the other his Servants out of the Country: That the Interloper many times opens the Factor's Letters of Patterns, when his Commissions are considerable, and when these Patterns so luckily jumps, there can be no exact matching of them until the Eye-sight is cleared with a Glass of good Wine. In the drinking of which the Affairs of State are as well settled as that of Trade. And Directions must be given to the Makers when Opportunity offers,

fers, to manage Elections as well as govern their Chollers : And if the Wine chance to please their Pallats, they familiarly drink up the Sea, and joyn *England* to *Holland*, as exact as a Pattern cut out of the same Piece of Cloth.

But as by this Fraternity of Dealers so many Losses hath hapned, we are now like to have a Compensation in a new Race of Merchants : By the *Ishmaelites* inter-marrying with the Daughters of our *Canaanites* ; hereby to increase their Commissions by the choicest Goods and best Penniworths in a natural way : However by this means our Masquerade-Merchants will become half *English*, which will be better than all Forreign. Since our late Government hath not thought this Branch of our Merchandise worth their notice, which in the days of *Edward VI.* supported three hundred Merchants upon the Cloth Trade, and without peradventure as many upon the Linnens, designing a more brisk and dependent Employment for the young Sons of our Gentry.

I cannot but think, that the Forreign Merchants of *France*, *Holland*, *Flanders* and *Germany*, Laugh'd in their Sleeves, at the first Advice of this Preferment of their Servants in *England*, that was to entail them so many good Penniworths ; who are much to be commended in making the best of their Markets, otherwise their Folly had been more betray'd in not hitting the Blot, than ours that gave Opportunity in leaving it open. But Experience shews us, that Friendship and good Neighbourhood is best preserved by an exact keeping of Mounds, especially where there is great odds in the Sweetness of the Turf.

Credit in Trade, in the whole Practice of it, is extreemly impoverishing and prejudicial to our Nation, which hath insensibly grown upon us these late Years, and will unavoidably destroy all Substantial Traders, and Order in Trade, if not prevented. It hath in the first Place been too great a Spur to Ambition (the Epidemical Distemper of our Nation) and made all Ranks of People put their Children to Trades above their Abilities of setting them up, which hath drained the Country of little Stocks, that otherwise would have been employed in Husbandry ; too much increased the Numbers of our easie Traders, and lessened our Grasers, Farmers, and a laborious sort of People, that are much wanting to a full Improvement of our Land, the Foundation of our Trade.



In the next place, it hath brought an Interloper into almost all Trades, without being regularly brought up to it. Since all Government in Trade hath been laid aside, which is at present a very great Grievance to the Trade of our Nation: This hath left the Burden too hard upon those of his own Rank, and spoiled those above him. And we have too many that spend their Time Idly in Coffee-houses, getting their Livelihood by peeling the Country, that are really wanted in digging of Ditches, and improving our Land; which is a dry sort of Livelihood, I must confess, compared with getting of it with a Stroak of the Pen, but of Moment enough to be considered by our Government.

But I proceed to another Inducement to our long Credit in Trade, which is likewise the Off-spring of the former. Forreign Merchants, especially the Dutch, by this Freedom of our Markets, in buying our English Commodities, have been induced to send over all the Native Commodities of their own Country. As likewise the Product of all other Parts that will yield an Advantage in *England*, to their Agents here upon their own Accounts, to be disposed in a retail Manner as Occasions hath required them; which in former Days were bought by our Merchants in their Markets, and brought over for the Service of *England*. Whilst our Trade forthose parts was incorporated in English Hands. The woollen Manufactures of *England*, in those Days being esteemed the commanding Commodity in the Trade of the whole World, as appears by the Priviledges granted to the Company of our Merchant Adventurers at their Residences abroad; their fine Linnens, Spicery, Whale-bone; Mader, &c. are now sold off to our Linnen-drapers, Grocers, Mercers, Salters, &c. upon a long Credit, upon this Consideration, that Credit in Trade in *England* is valued proportionable to our Interest of Money, which being Six *per Cent*, and Money in *Holland* but at three, it was Bait enough to a frugal Dutch-Man. And it is a little remarkable truly, that such large Stocks of Goods that are always lodging in their Ware-houses, and in the Hands of our Traders in *England*, which hath had the Protection of our Government, and afterwards the same Freedom of our Markets as our Native Subjects, should yet be excused the Payment of the least Share towards the Charge of our War, whilst their Goods hath been carried and recarried in their own

Bottoms, which in time will unavoidably pull down the Bullworks of our Nation, whilst I dare undertake that these very Goods have been paid for by many English Traders that durst not own them. In a Subsidy granted to King *James* the first *Anno Septimo Cap. 22.* the Goods belonging to English Subjects were charged at two Shillings eight Pence in the Pound, and all such Goods as this belonging to Aliens, was charged at five Shillings four Pence.

These Goods will be easily discovered, there being exact Accounts kept, Debtor and Creditor, in all their Factors Books, and certainly be worth a looking after, when there may be one German Merchants Account to be found that deals for one Hundred Thousand Pound *per Annum* in Linnens. And upon the other hand, did we save the Money in the Exchequer that is drawn back by Goods exported from our own Plantations, (*viz.*) Die stuff, (whereby the Dutch are inabled to die twenty *per Cent.* cheaper than the English) Tobacco, Sugars, and the Linnens that are sent hence to our own Plantations, it would advance very considerable towards our next Years Expence.

How far our Nation is concerned in throwing open all the Mysteries of our Trade to any Part of the World, and in letting in Persians and Grecians to be acquainted with the Prices of our Goods in a low time of Trade, I am not of Ability to determine, but cannot but take Notice of the Occasion of their coming over, and how that Part of our Trade falls under Consideration in my present Subject of Credit.

Our Honourable East-India Company, some Years since falling into a little Eclipse in their Credit, whereby Money grew scarce with them, and their Manufactures of Indian Silks, Mullins, and Callicoes, which were wholly carried on with Silver, being their only Profit, through the cheap Wormanship of the Indians, who were now (by Artificers sent over) brought to humour our English Fancies, or our Ladies brought to fall in love with them, wholly neglects the sending over any of our Woollen Manufacturers for three or four Years, to some Parts of the East-Indies that they formerly served, upon which (a Famine of Cloth growing on in those Parts) several

ral Persians and Grecians, mustered up their Forces like *Jacob's* Sons, and undertook a hazardous Journey into a strange Land where they heard was Plenty, for the Good of themselves and their Country-men; their fair Enterprize succeeded well in their Journey, but not without Difficulty (according to the Parallel) when they attained the Land, for they now found themselves within the Charter of the East-India Company; and although they saw great Plenty of the Goods their Countrey wanted, yet their Hands were still bound up from procuring it for them; but this Difficulty was accommodated by the Payment of a Fine of ten *per Cent.* to the Company, or more, for what Goods they bought; upon which they were permitted to go freely into our Packer's Houses, and were courted with as good and cheap Penniworths as *England* afforded; and paid for their Cloth before they exported it.

Upon great Complaint, as well upon this Account as several others, against the East-India Company, to the Government, They were lately obliged to ship off annually one Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds worth of our Woollen Manufactures, for the Advantage of the Country, which readily they agreed to; but by the Sharpness of their Wits they turned this Obligation into a Support of their Darling Profit; which I think is the Master-piece of their Contrivance, and it was effected by this Means.

The *Persians* and *Grecians* were now to return again into their own Countrey all except *Callander*, who was their chiefest Judgment in the Woollen Manufacture; who was to be left behind to inspect their Penniworths, and see their Goods ship'd off according to their Agreement: And to save their Trouble and Hazard in remitting their Money for *England*, it should be paid into their Factory in the *West-Indies*. This Affair being so well accommodated, the Company now gives out that they resolve to devote themselves to the good of the Nation, and to buy all the Cloth that was made in their way; and in the first Place, to carry on their Design, they espoused the Interest of three or four considerable Packers, that had the command of the Sale of great Quantities of Cloth, but were privately



Members of their own Company; these now out-vye one another in their Bills of Parcels of Cloth, where they drew many Clothiers into the same Bargain as one and the same; and as Money was paid, without Distinction they divided it, and Multitudes of Samples were sent into the East-India House. Some Scruples were made at first, by their Proposals of a little Accommodation in Payment upon the score of some Ships that they daily expected; which difficulty was soon got over, by the first Examples. A considerable Quantity of Cloth was bought, *Callander* inspected the Penniworths, and the Cloth was Shipt off.

Upon Pretence of Disappointments, Payments are now stoppt, and Bonds given, with lawful Interests to the Clothiers for six Months; that time expires and no Payment, and now going on for the other six Months. And thus they have fixt a Debt of almost one Hundred Thousand Pounds upon the Countrey, and no Possibility of paying it off, until their Goods return from their Factory that this Money purchased; so that instead of their relieving the Countrey, they have made the Countrey relieve them, and reduced our Poor to Hunger and Nakedness, which is a very severe Dispensation upon the Countrey at this Juncture of Time. Doubtless when the Obligation was laid by the Government for the buying of so much of our Woollen Manufactures, it was likewise intended that there should be *quid pro quo*; and whatsoever Damages doth come from hence to the Countrey, must be owing to the Unkindness of her own Members; for had our Bill past to preserve the Publick Market of *Blackwell-hall*, the East-India Company must as well paid for this Cloth, as their Bills of one Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pounds that were drawn upon them from *Cadiz* at the same Time. He had need of a Roman Faith, that will give Credit with Goods upon a common Seal.

But to consider Credit upon the other side, where it makes no Returns in Profit or Charity, which is made good in the very letter in all our short Staple Indian Silk and Callicoes; which Credit hath had as Impoverishing Effects upon this side as the other, and as politickly drawn on  
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It was the Magnetick Force of the nimble Current of our new Fashions, that swelled the large Folio's of our Silk-man and Upstart Millener to such a Bulk, that they were like to overturn the Statute of *Westminster*, *De donis Conditionabilibus*, and center the Grandeur of our Nation in *Sampsons* and *Goliaths* in Trade, where the meanest Settlement must be a Coach and Six. This Credit hath been like the Duke of *Modena's* Sword, that spared neither Friend nor Foe; and in our late Current of Affairs it was impossible to be withstood, when there was not a Ship that came from the *East-Indies*, but brought home some new Fashion or other; which by their frequent Address with Guinea's, and fine Indian Presents to the governing Star of our Fashions, was soon enough set forward, being so agreeable to the Errand the Goddess came upon; which was impossible to be withstood by a Feminine Power.

When I consider this nimble Expence upon one side, the lessening of Rents and ill Payment upon the other, I cannot but fancy that the Country-Gentleman's Estate (for many Years past) hath been like *St. Laurence* upon the Grid-iron, unluckily melted upon both sides; and that he hath had as hard a Task (if Bless'd with Daughters) to keep out of these Books, as *Ulysses* had to pass by the *Cyrens*. Nay, which hath been an Aggravation, our late Court-Ladies, to out-run the Strain of the Times, and give an Example to the whole Nation, hath insensibly been Metamorphis'd into a substantial sort of Superstition; in being become like the Psalmist Idols, that had Hands, but handled not the Counter-part of Passive Obedience.

But Bless'd be the Heavens, the Influence of a good Example hath once more recover'd the Faculty; nay, discover'd so good a Satisfaction, that many are seemingly under a voluntary Penance for lost Time, which in all likelihood will redeem our Female-Sex from the Government of the *Indians*; otherwise they will become like the Foolish Builder that built his House upon the Sands; and convert their Labours into the greater Ridicule, by falling into the Emblem of the Spider that works in Cobwebs. Which single particular, in Seven Years Practice, will be a full Compensation for the utmost Expence of our Revolution.

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I shall not endeavour to make any Calculation of our Loss to the Publick by these Practices, being very far from believing, that this Management grew on upon us by the Inadvertency of our late Governments, but rather by the contrary: But it's Matter of Amazement and Admiration, to consider the slow Advance of those that bear so necessary a part in the Superstructure, after Providence hath been so favourable to settle us once more upon so good a Foundation: Whilst it hath long since likewise pleased His Sacred Majesty to recommend the Ballancing of Trade.

I wish we are not convinced of our Negligence in the great Affair of the Trade of our Nation, when it is too late. I am well assured, had there been due Care taken to prevent the Exportation of our Wooll, at the Beginning of our Wars, and encourage Trade in all its particulars, as in Prudence we ought and might have done, had we laid but two Shillings in the Pound equally upon Land, and raised the rest that our Occasions required by an Excise, our labouring People, which would have paid the greatest Share, had lived much better than now they have done, and the rest of our Expence had been saved.

In a long Combat we ought to be tender of loading our Sword hand; and this I am sure, that whilst by Annuities, Lotteries, and Banks, we have fixt great part of our trading Stocks in a Mortgage upon the Nation, not again to be commanded, thereby to prevent an Excise, we have tied up our own Hands in Trade, and fixt it to a very dangerous Degree, in the Hands of the Dutch and other Nations; who hath as effectually excised the labouring Part of our Nation, as if they lived under their own Government; and will every Year do it more and more pursuant to their own Interest, and in Favour of their own Subjects; and its a little melancholly to consider, that the little Trade that we have left is liable to be stopt, if they please.

It is a vast Sum of Money through the whole Nation, that three pence in a Shilling in the Workmanship of our Manufactures does amount to, which is the least that hath been lost. But the Value much greater, when one third part  
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of our People have not been imployed, whilst our Wooll hath been exported, but remained as a Burthen upon the Land. To this being added the loss of our Merchandise, besides the low price of our Goods, and likewise our Frieght, it will amount to a Prodigious Sum; and I doubt it will be found a greater Difficulty to recover our Trade than at present is thought upon.

IV. Another Precipis that seems to threaten the Ruin of our Trade, is the low Ebb of our Coin in Quantity and Quality. Wages is too much paid already in Goods, to the Sorrow of our Labourers, which in a little Time will be forced into a Practice, as in the Days of our Ancestors; it is the Drift of too many designing Persons in our Nation, to lull us asleep in Security. We were lately told by a great Monarch in Trade, that our Nation was at present in a very thriving Condition; and substantially proved his Point by the Increase of our Coaches in the City of London. Our Government hath since turned that part of our Splendour into our Support, which I think was but a golden Dream; and I can't but think it seasonable to turn another part of the Profuseness of our Nation into our Relief, which is our great Prodigality in Plate, in which you are served in every Two-pot-house in the great City.

This being the Ambitious Strain of our late Times, it now remains as a dead Stock upon too many Hands that wants Money to pay their Debts, and would be glad of an Opportunity to make themselves easie in getting rid of it, which would be affected by an Expedient, in my Judgment, that would be a farther Service to us at this Time, (*viz.*) by lessening the Standard of our Coin one penny in a Shilling or more, and giving this Advantage in ready Money coined to all Persons that brought such a Weight of Silver to the Mint. Which would be Inducement enough to bring in a considerable Stock through the Nation, and be a good Cordial at this time to a Languishing Trade; to which being added a proportionable Advance to all our Mill'd Money that holds its full weight, it would be a double Advantage, as in the Increase, according to the Practice of *France*; so likewise in securing it from being exported, the present Disproportion

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in the Weight of our current Coin seems greater than can in reason be allowed, and this Addition in a new Coin that could not be clipt, would be a Stock to carry on our Trade withall, whilst the other in due time, might be new stampd.

V. Another Grievance in Trade, that hath very much impoverish'd our Poor, hath been the Private Interest of Companies of Merchants, in making Stops in Trade to advance the Prices of their Goods at home and abroad, thereby to get those they buy the Cheaper : This hath Inrich'd a few, and Impoverish'd multitudes.

This being like *Charibdis*, so evident a Rock to all Considering People, that Impoverish'd our Poor, and to be avoided, was so cunningly managed by a designing Party in the Heat of our late Affairs, that it split our Interest upon *Scilla*, a Rock that was much more Dangerous. So great a Difficulty is it, for a People that are inclined to be hot and Splenatick, to avoid one Extream, without falling into another: The first brought home the Riches to our own Nation, though in a great Inequality: The other, in not Supporting our Companies, hath centred the Riches of Trade in Forreign Nations, in a greater Impoverishing of our Poor; which in a short time will make *England* like *Spain* and *Ireland*. I think all Charters ought to be inspected, these Mischiefs prevented, and Companies enlarged.

VI. Another Oppression upon our Poor, hath been the sending out our Woollen Manufacture without being fully Manufactured: This hath very much affected our Diers, lessened our Customs, and oppress'd our Sea-men, Die-stuff being a bulky Commodity. This hath been carried on contrary to many Acts of Parliament, and hath been chiefly occasioned by the drawing back of Customs in Logwood and other Die-stuff from our own Plantations, and the suffering it to be ingross'd in *England*, whereby the *Dutch* hath been enabled to Die so much Cheaper than we.

VII. The last Grievance in Trade that I shall mention, hath fallen upon our poor Sea-men, which is a Wound in our Vitals. This hath been lately considered and recommended  
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by his Most Sacred Majesty, as a great Encouragement to Trade, as indeed nothing can be more. This is no way to be effected, but by an Encouragement of their Immployment. By the Statute *Primo Eliz. Cap. 13.* it was enacted, That whatsoever Merchant did Ship any Merchandise upon a Forreign Bottom, he should pay Aliens Duties. This kept the Immployment in the Hands of English Sea-men. By the 25 *Caroli II.* Aliens Duties upon all our Manufactures were taken off, and hereby the English Merchant was lost as well as the English Seaman. This hath prevailed so far, that in a considerable Fleet that lately carried off our Woollen Manufactures to *Holland, Flanders and Germany*, conveyed by English Men of War, there was but two English Ships. And I doubt our Share in the Merchandise as light.

When I consider the many Stops in Trade, that hath been made since our Happy Revolution, and the Contrivance of those within our own Bowels to Oppress our Poor: First, In the Exportation of so great Quantities of our Wooll: Next, In tying up the Hands of so many of our own Merchants, that were willing to Trade to the *Levant*, which increased the Consumption of our Cloth, but it was by the Moths: Next, In binding up so great a part of the Clothiers Stocks in the common Seal of the *East-India* Bonds that affected no particular Person: The vast quantities of our Teasles, Fullers Earth, &c. that hath been exported to *Holland*; and that violent Stop in Trade that was made at *Worcester*, in a little time after the Clothiers had sold off almost all their Cloth. I can believe no less, than a Conspiracy to incite our Poor to Levelling against their own Inclination, Necessity being a Hard Weapon: And that there hath been a Design against the Common Good of our Nation, as sure as that of *Cataline* against the Commonwealth of *Rome*: And I think our Affairs doth as much call for the well-digested Temper of publick-spirited *Tully*, as the Strain of those days.

*Patere tua Consilia non semis? Constrictam jam omnium horum conscientia teneri conjurationem tuam non vides? Quid proxima? Quid superiore nocte egeris ubi fueris: Quos Convocaveris, quid Consilii ceperis: Quem nostrum ignorare arbitraris. O Tempora! O Mores! Senatus hic intelligit, Consul vidit: Iste tamen viri. Vivit imo vero in Canatum venit.*



And thus I have given an Impartial Account of the Petitions  
 of our Poor, which can no way be redress'd, in my weak  
 Opinion, but by a Select Committee of the most Able and  
 Steady Members of our Great Council, to sit *ad hoc* in *disem*,  
 and examine these Grievances, which I humbly submit to  
 Consideration.

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